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Report of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues on recommendations made by the Forum on Minority Issues at its tenth session on the theme "Minority youth: towards inclusive and diverse societies"

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to transmit to the Human Rights Council the report of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues on recommendations made by the Forum on Minority Issues at its tenth session, held on 30 November and 1 December 2017, on the theme "Minority youth: towards inclusive and diverse societies", prepared pursuant to Council resolutions 6/15 and 19/23.

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Report of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues on recommendations made by the Forum on Minority Issues at its tenth session on the theme "Minority youth: towards inclusive and diverse societies"

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolutions 6/15 and 19/23, the Human Rights Council decided that the Independent Expert on minority issues should guide the work of the Forum on Minority Issues and prepare its annual meetings, and invited him/her to include in his/her report thematic recommendations of the Forum and recommendations for future thematic subjects, for consideration by the Council. In its resolution 25/5, the Council decided to extend the mandate of the mandate holder as a Special Rapporteur on minority issues, and renewed the mandate in its resolution 34/6. The present report, which was prepared pursuant to resolutions 6/15 and 19/23, contains the recommendations of the tenth session of the Forum on Minority Issues, held on 30 November and 1 December 2017. At the session, the Forum considered the theme "Minority youth: towards inclusive and diverse societies". The work of the Forum was guided by the newly appointed Special Rapporteur on minority issues, Fernand de Varennes. The Chair of the session was Tarik Kurdi, of the Sudan. More than 500 participants attended the session, including representatives of Member States and minority communities, non-governmental organizations, United Nations specialized agencies, regional and intergovernmental bodies and national human rights institutions. Young minority advocates, representatives of youth organizations and young members of governmental delegations from all regions attended the Forum, some of them for the first time. The list of participants is available at www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Minority/Pages/Session10.aspx.

2. The present recommendations draw primarily from the discussions among and contributions made by participants to the Forum at its tenth session under each item of the agenda (A/HRC/FMI/2017/1). The recommendations are grounded in international law and standards. They aim to provide guidance for the effective implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities. In view of the cross-cutting nature of the theme of the tenth session, reference is also made to recommendations formulated at previous sessions that are of specific relevance to the empowerment of young people belonging to minorities.

3. Key elements of the legal and normative framework include the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Convention against Discrimination in Education; the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages; the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities; and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Oslo Recommendations regarding the Linguistic Rights of National Minorities.

4. Specifically on the topic of minority rights with regard to education, the following instruments are of relevance: the OSCE Hague Recommendations Regarding the Education Rights of National Minorities; the Incheon Declaration: Education 2030: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all, adopted by the 2015 World Education Forum; and *Language Rights of Linguistic Minorities: A Practical Guide for Implementation* developed by the Special Rapporteur on minority issues.

5. Regarding the right to political participation, the following instruments are relevant: the Lund Recommendations on the Effective Participation of National Minorities in Public Life and the Ljubljana Guidelines on Integration of Diverse Societies of OSCE, and as well as the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life adopted by the Council of Europe.

6. With regard to the human rights of members of minorities in relation to the media, key instruments and guidelines include: the OSCE Guidelines on the Use of Minority Languages in the Broadcast Media; *Bookmarks: A Manual for Combating Hate Speech Online Through Human Rights Education*, published by the Council of Europe; Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) on youth, peace and stability; *Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding: A Practice Note*, published by the Inter-Agency Network on Youth

Development Working Group on Youth and Peacebuilding (2016); and the Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding (2016), published by the United Nations Development Programme.

7. The recommendations of the tenth session of the Forum are organized under the four items of the agenda of the session.

8. In its recommendations the Forum highlights the primary responsibility of the State to protect — via national education institutions and bodies, local governments and other public offices, public broadcasting agencies and conflict prevention mechanisms — the rights of minority youth. States should comply with this obligation in view of the fact that minority youth may be subjected to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination due to their age and to their ethnic, national, linguistic or religious background; discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation or physical abilities may further accentuate their situation of marginalization. The Forum also calls on United Nations entities to pay greater attention to young persons belonging to minorities, who may need additional support or protection to enable them to engage fully in society. The recommendations also address minority youth directly, encouraging those who wish to bring positive change to their societies to step up efforts with a view to increasing the impact of their advocacy work and to stay connected to their community while also building bridges with other communities. The Forum also urges minority communities, as well as the broader society, to give support and recognition to the work of minority youth in seeking to uphold human rights and to bring about positive change.

9. The recommendations address a wide range of situations faced by young people from minority groups around the world. They demonstrate the differing levels of enjoyment of the rights of minorities in different countries, as well as the commonalities and differences that may exist in the aspirations of young minority men and women.

10. The recommendations are intended to be implemented in countries around the world in full respect of universal human rights standards, regardless of the political, religious, historical and cultural backgrounds or any specific State ideology, religion or value system.

II. General considerations

11. The United Nations and its Member States have recognized that younger generations play an important role in their respective societies and contribute to advancing various aspects in the social, economic, and environmental spheres. Such a contribution can only be achieved by ensuring that youth are at the forefront of the decision-making process. This applies equally to young men and women who are members of minority groups.

12. Defending the rights of the youth and supporting their aspirations must be an international and national priority. Global social and economic development are heavily dependent on the active participation of younger generations in this process. In working towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, no one must be left behind; minority youth must not be left out of these processes and considerations.

13. National youth policies, national youth coordination mechanisms and national youth programmes of action are critically important, and fighting discrimination among young people and including the rights of minorities must be strong components.

14. The tenth session of the Forum was an opportunity to hear the voices of young minority men and women who feel excluded from many of these processes. It brought together young people from a number of different countries, most of whom have limited possibilities to address international bodies such as the United Nations. Their situations were diverse, but their aspirations converged towards a plea for acceptance and tolerance, as well as recognition of their rights as members of minorities.

15. The Forum also gave a voice to minority young people seeking protection for their lives and the lives of their family members and communities in situations of conflict or persecution. Some took the floor to denounce situations in which they said Governments or other actors were preventing them from claiming their linguistic, cultural or religious

identities. Others testified to economic and social marginalization suffered as young and minority persons, preventing them from feeling that they were an equal and valued component of society. Some participants explained how, even where minority rights appeared to be generally protected by law, policies and dedicated programmes, young people from those communities nevertheless continued to suffer from endemic discrimination and xenophobia and struggled to make their voices heard. Some of them were marginalized in various aspects of public life, including education, political participation and media representation. As a result, in some cases society failed to adapt to their specific needs and to provide the support to enable them to come forward and assume their place in public life.

16. Participants at the Forum raised issues relating to minority youth access to employment, and their participation in the economic life in general. The discussions were inspired by the work of the Forum in this particular area at its third session in 2010, including its relevant recommendations (A/HRC/16/46).

A. Panel discussions

17. The discussions in the first panel focused on inclusive education for minority youth. Participants discussed the issue of access to education and accommodation of minority culture and language in various programmes and facilities. They highlighted that the right to education was fundamental to a number of other rights, including political, economic and cultural rights. Furthermore, they discussed the importance of education in minority languages and how it fostered the integration of minority youth in society. In that context, participants also discussed the role of informal education in sensitizing youth to tolerance and to religious, cultural and linguistic diversity.

18. The second panel focused on the participation of minority youth in public life, including in the political, civil, economic, social and cultural spheres. Participants raised the issue of political engagement of minority youth and the importance of minority youth representation in public institutions at the national and local levels, and reflected on how to increase the positive visibility of young members of minorities in societies. They also discussed the importance of involving minority youth in decision-making processes, particularly those that concern them directly.

19. The third panel addressed the opportunities that media offered to minority youth in the digital age. Participants called for greater efforts to ensure access to digital media for all, including marginalized minority communities. They shared experiences of initiatives undertaken to respond to hate speech and bullying on the Internet, and discussed the role of minority-led media initiatives to empower youth and to enable them to challenge biased and stereotypical narratives.

20. The fourth panel considered the role of minority youth as agents of change for peace and stability. Participants presented recommendations regarding the need for greater consultation with and participation by minority youth in conflict-prevention and peacebuilding processes. They highlighted the importance of promoting intercultural dialogue between majority and minority youth as a tool to prevent conflict and promote reconciliation in post-conflict societies. They also acknowledged the key role of minority youth in the maintenance of peace and societal cohesion.

B. General recommendations

21. **States should ratify and adhere to all international and regional human rights instruments that protect and promote the rights of minorities.**

22. **States should ensure full implementation of international human rights instruments in national law and practice, including in particular the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, and Linguistic minorities, and should ensure respect for constitutional and other guarantees aimed at the protection and promotion of the rights of minorities.**

23. **All States, international organizations and civil society and other entities working with youth should exert maximum efforts to collect disaggregated data to inform policymaking and ensure that minority youth are not excluded, directly or indirectly, from any effort to secure the realization of human rights for all.**

24. **States should adapt their legal frameworks and implement representative policies to prioritize the needs of minority youth and facilitate their participation in decision-making in all areas that concern them, in order to facilitate their effective inclusion (without assimilation) in society.**

25. **United Nations entities should explicitly refer to minority youth when developing resolutions, policies, guidelines and other tools addressing the situation of young people.**

26. **States and international organizations should create an enabling environment for young human rights activists belonging to minorities so that they can monitor the implementation of States' obligations towards young people under international human rights law, and to facilitate dialogue between young people belonging to minorities and their own Governments, national human rights institutions, regional organizations and the United Nations.**

III. Recommendations to empower minority youth through inclusive education

A. Discussion

27. The discussion was introduced by Nouha Grine, President of the Amazigh Culture Club and Youth Programme Officer at the Ministry of Youth and Sport (Tunisia); Elzbieta Kuzborska, of the Association of Polish Academics in Lithuania (Poland); and Wooki Park-Kim, of the Human Rights Association for Korean Residents in Japan (Japan). In their presentations they addressed issues of discrimination and diversity within formal education systems as well as within wider youth-led awareness-raising initiatives. They focused on the benefits of teaching minority youth in their mother tongue, which would increase the chances for academic success and in turn foster their effective participation in society. They spoke of the role of schools in preserving the identities of minorities by increasing the knowledge of the younger generations with regard to the language, culture and history of their communities. Other issues discussed included discrimination, financial hurdles confronting minority youth in accessing mainstream education and lack of recognition of diplomas awarded by schools whose students are primarily from minority groups.

28. The subsequent plenary discussion was moderated by the Special Adviser to the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth, Saskia Schellekens. Participants discussed the role of formal and informal education of young people in bringing cultures together and teaching tolerance and the value of diversity. It was important to adapt curricula, courses and institutions to enable minority youth to realize their full potential.

29. The right to be taught in one's mother tongue at school and at university was a recurring topic raised by a number of participants and characterized as fundamental for minorities to preserve their identity. Participants also highlighted that the exercise of that right should not be perceived as a sign of deliberate isolation by minorities within society, and that their access to education in their mother tongue should not prevent them from learning other languages, including the official State language. At the same time, other participants warned that minority children and youth often had access only to poor-quality education, due to lack of adequate support in terms of infrastructure and teaching staff.

30. A number of participants suggested that, in some cases, the minority language could be the language of instruction in preschool and primary school, while the majority language could be taught as a separate subject. In the secondary- and tertiary-level curricula, minority languages should be used in a manner that adequately reflects the number of speakers of a particular language. Participants argued that such an approach had proven cost-effective in

the long term by reducing dropout and repetition rates, improving academic results and the levels of literacy in both the minorities' mother tongue and the official or majority language. That would eventually lead to greater family and community engagement in education.

31. The preservation of linguistic and cultural heritage and the promotion of diversity and tolerance of various communities was also a recurring concern that a number of participants suggested could be addressed by designing multicultural school curricula. They also expressed concerns about the tendency of certain Governments to use school curricula to assimilate young people into the majority culture. A number of participants raised concerns about the negative impact of highly centralized educational systems in certain countries, which negatively affected the access of marginalized communities to education and resulted in a low level of minority enrolment.

32. Finally, the participants explored the importance of ensuring human rights education from a young age for both majority and minority youth, in order to further awareness and understanding of minority rights.

B. Recommendations

Access to quality education

33. States should take legislative and policy measures to guarantee that minority youth have equal access to education of equal quality, delivered in an inclusive environment that fosters greater achievement for all. This includes the use of minority languages at all levels, as much, and for as long, as possible. Schools and universities should ensure that minority students who enter their institution receive adequate support to achieve academic success equal to that of non-minority students. Educational institutions must be sensitive to minority, gender and other issues, including through the collection of data disaggregated by ethnicity or national origin, religion and language, as well as gender, sexual orientation and physical abilities. Measures such as scholarships, fee waivers or quotas should be considered as special measures that can contribute to increasing educational opportunities for persons belonging to minorities.

Delivering education in an inclusive environment

34. States need to play a proactive role to foster inclusive learning environments in their education systems. Teachers and professors should receive training on using inclusive teaching strategies that address the needs of students with a variety of ethnic, religious and linguistic backgrounds, learning styles and abilities. Inclusive learning environments are essential to contribute to minority students' feeling equally valued. Additionally, adequate teaching and learning materials, including textbooks, which provide information about minorities and facilitate the learning of minority languages should be accessible to students.

35. States should recognize in their constitutions the diversity of their populations and the right of members of minorities to be taught in their mother tongue. States should develop programmes that offer teaching in minority languages, while ensuring that minorities also have access to instruction in other languages, including the official languages. The quality of instruction should not differ between programmes taught in different languages. States should take measures to ensure that members of minorities are able in practice to use their own language at school.

36. States should ensure that persons belonging to minorities are able to access the justice system to pursue collective claims for linguistically and culturally appropriate education, and that the justice system can ensure effective remedies when minority education rights are not respected. Minorities should be able to access support, including from civil society organizations, to ensure effective access to such legal procedures.

37. States should ensure that multicultural education is part of the school curriculum. Minority communities, including youth, should be consulted and

participate in the design of such curricula, in order to include accurate portrayals of different communities' history, traditions, language and culture, as well as the various beliefs or religious practices of those minorities living in the country. Additionally, education should be delivered by a corps of teachers and professors that is itself representative of the diversity of society at the local and national levels.

38. **States should combat racial discrimination and xenophobia in and through school education. They should refrain from adopting policies or education strategies aimed at segregating students into different educational institutions or classes based on their minority status; minority and majority youth should ideally be taught together in one class to ensure diversity of views and experiences.**

Support for minority-led educational initiatives

39. **States should allow, recognize and, where possible, facilitate the establishment and operation of private schools and educational services using minority languages as a medium of instruction, provided that they operate in conformity with national educational standards. This may in certain cases be the most appropriate way to better promote knowledge of minority students' own language and culture. States should refrain from imposing unduly burdensome legal and administrative requirements regulating the establishment and management of such institutions.**

40. **Minority youth should be able to choose whether to attend a regular school or a licensed minority school. The choice should not be imposed on them either by the State or by the minority community.**

41. **In time of conflict, States and international organizations should ensure that minority youth who are displaced or living in conflict zones are able to receive education, including in their own language.**

Informal education

42. **Human rights, including minority rights and fundamental rights such as the principle of non-discrimination, should be taught to young people through formal and informal education programmes.**

43. **States should undertake efforts to educate majority and minority youth on human rights, minority rights and civic engagement through digital media, including by offering free online courses accessible to all.**

44. **States should ensure that the education system provides information in accessible language to youth, and in particular minority youth, about the importance of active citizenship and how youth can participate in public life. States should also support non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders that provide youth with non-formal education in active citizenship.**

45. **Special education and community development measures should be adopted to encourage strong and positive self-identification and self-esteem of young members of minorities.**

IV. Recommendations to promote the participation of minority youth in public life

A. Discussion

46. The session on participation of minority youth in public life was introduced by Anina Ciuciu, a national of France and Romania of Roma background, law student and co-founder of the "May 16 Movement" (France); Jessica Reeves, Chief Operating Officer at Voto Latino (United States of America); and Mina Thabet, co-founder of the Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms and of the Maspero Youth Union (Egypt). They stressed the importance of addressing the issue of underrepresentation of minority youth in

national and international decision-making bodies and in legislative and policy development processes. They drew attention to the link between the level of engagement and representation of minority youth in decision-making and the level of discrimination they faced in society. They particularly highlighted the responsibility of the State to promote diversity and provide equal opportunities to all minorities. They acknowledged that young persons belonging to minorities could experience disproportionate difficulties or obstacles when engaging in political processes. Minority youth might disengage from public life because political representatives did not take their concerns into account. The speakers encouraged minority youth to take a prominent role in political processes in their countries, whether by exercising their right to vote or by standing for election.

47. The ensuing discussion was moderated by the Director of the Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities of OSCE, Henrik Villadsen. Participants examined how effective participation by minority youth in public life could lead to more cohesion and to the recognition of diversity in society more broadly. They also acknowledged that people, including minority youth, had a particularly important role to play in promoting sustainable development. They highlighted discrimination, social exclusion and extreme poverty as mutually reinforcing hurdles that prevented minority youth from participating in public life. Representatives of Member States shared good practices on how to take into account the specific needs and aspirations of young minority people in the development by national institutions of policies targeted at youth and minority youth.

B. Recommendations

48. **States should guarantee the representation of minority youth in decision-making processes at the local, national and international levels, especially those concerning youth and minority policies. States should also guarantee greater transparency and outreach to minority youth in decision-making processes, for example by using youth-friendly tools such as online platforms and social media to promote the engagement of youth. These measures should enable minority youth to reach their full potential and actively participate in all spheres of public life.**

49. **States should ensure an environment that fosters participation of minority youth in public life and support initiatives such as youth centres, with programmes that sensitize youth about the benefits of participation in decision-making, particularly in marginalized areas where minority communities live. They should monitor the occurrence of hate speech, xenophobia and discrimination and take legal action against such abuses so that minority youth feel safe being visible in society. States should ensure that minorities, including minority youth, are adequately represented in their national and local institutions, including municipalities, schools and police forces, and should consider the use of quotas to this end. They should explicitly acknowledge and celebrate diversity within their societies and demonstrate their commitment to the protection of minority rights.**

50. **States should support initiatives that reach out to minority youth to encourage them to be agents of change in their own communities through political engagement, from the first step of voting through to running for elected office to representing their communities.**

51. **States should recognize that minority youth may express different political opinions than those favoured by the Government and must respect this diversity of opinion as part of freedom of speech and opinion, which is essential to democracy and stability. Minority communities should themselves encourage and respect the expressions and opinions of minority youth, even when the views of minority youth differ from those of the leaders of minority groups.**

52. **When implementing policies and programmes targeted at increasing the participation of youth in public life, including in the political, civil, social, cultural and economic spheres, States should use disaggregated data analysis to identify whether these policies and measures reach minority youth on an equal basis and are effective in promoting their participation in public life.**

53. **The denial of citizenship disproportionately affects persons belonging to minorities and prevents them from participating in public life. Statelessness needs to be effectively addressed by States, including through ratification and implementation of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.**

54. **Minority youth should have access to employment in the public sector without discrimination based on language, religion or ethnicity. States should consider creating posts specifically for ethnic minority youth, including through the use of quotas.**

55. **Special measures should also be implemented to facilitate social entrepreneurship by young people from minority backgrounds, including through training and financial support to such initiatives.**

56. **States should develop training and professional orientation programmes to effectively address youth unemployment, and in particular unemployment among minority youth. Such programmes need also to be made available in minority languages.**

57. **Public institutions should explore innovative ways to reach out to younger audiences and convey messages about the importance of political participation and advocacy. Examples of such initiatives include online platforms to collect opinions or petitions for young people to feed into central Government and municipal policies; youth parliaments that consider ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity; and training programmes for minority youth that promote participation.**

58. **States should also support efforts to engage minority youth through sport and culture. Such activities can also help develop a spirit of community, both within the minority community and between the minority community and the broader society.**

59. **States should ensure that minority youth are able to participate and organize public cultural events without the need for prior permission or, in limited circumstances where prior permission may be justified, without being arbitrarily denied permission, and should support other cultural events that may contribute to giving positive visibility to minority youth in society. They should make financial and other resources available to minority youth for the purpose of enabling cultural expression through public events as a means to promote diversity in society. It is crucial to consider creating programmes, or allocating resources for programmes, to provide training for youth to participate in cultural industries, for instance, training on music recording and production, video production and managing business aspects of cultural programming, including in their own languages.**

60. **Ministries of culture should include in their budget adequate funding for minority youth cultural groups, with particular attention to minority women.**

61. **States should provide financial support to privately delivered programmes, through which youth from national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minority groups can gain relevant substantive knowledge in an area where their interest, experience and leadership skills lie.**

62. **States should create an enabling environment for the establishment and functioning of organizations representative of minority groups.**

63. **States should value and promote multiculturalism and respect for diversity, and through this prism develop and implement concrete actions to combat and curb hate speech, radicalization of any type, intolerance, discrimination and violence.**

V. Recommendations regarding the challenges and opportunities for minority youth in media in the digital age

A. Discussion

64. The panel discussion on minority youth in media in the digital age was introduced by Marina Shupac, journalist and Minority Fellow Coordinator at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (Republic of Moldova); Jonathan Jackson, co-founder of Blavity.com (United States of America); and Anju Singh, leader of the All India Dalit Mahila Adhikar Manch (India). The panellists shared their experiences in creating media platforms to amplify the voices of their communities and mobilize youth to be aware of the human rights of their communities. The panellists shared the challenges and opportunities they had encountered using digital media technologies for use by young people in their communities, and young women in particular, to exercise and defend their rights. They referred to the difficulty they had experienced in accessing sources of funding for media initiatives and projects as young persons belonging to minorities. They also referred to the negative online rhetoric against minorities, in particular minority women. However, the panellists described social media as a tool for social change. For instance, appropriate use of social media could contribute to creating new solidarities between different minority communities and with the rest of society, pushing for new narratives that could combat misrepresentations of minorities in mainstream media and giving minority youth a unique means of expressing themselves freely in a manner that could not be easily obtained through other platforms.

65. The discussion was moderated by Rita Izsák-Ndiaye, former Special Rapporteur on minority issues and member-elect of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (Hungary). A number of participants noted that many minority communities, and in particular young women, did not have effective access to the Internet, and that a large portion of today's minority youth were excluded from the online world. Participants defined the Internet as having contributed to empowering youth by building bridges between communities and increasing their education and awareness about their rights and well-being. Participants spoke of their own minority-led media initiatives and about the tendency for minority media to be overshadowed by major media corporations, often because of a lack of financial resources. Participants described the issue of hate speech against minorities in the media as extremely damaging, shaping public opinion and deterring legislative bodies from adopting laws to help improve minority rights. Participants shared good practices in relation to the promotion of cultural diversity and inclusion in the media, for example government initiatives such as journalism awards for journalists who worked to promote a better understanding of diversity in societies.

B. Recommendations

66. **States should guarantee the right to freedom of expression within the media for all, in particular for young digital media users belonging to minorities. The right to freedom of expression of minority youth must be guaranteed online. At the same time, States should take effective measures to prevent and protect minorities against hate speech online.**

67. **States should refrain from curtailing access to social networks and blocking access to websites or restricting access to digital media by any other means, particularly in ways that have an arbitrary or disproportionate impact on minority youth. National human rights institutions can play an important role in providing independent oversight to ensure that no abusive blockage or censorship occurs and to ensure the safety of digital media users and any other young persons belonging to minorities who wish to be part of these discussions.**

68. **States should seek to proactively counter hate speech against minority youth, populism and xenophobia with a national strategy to combat hate speech on social media. States have a critical role to play in the promotion of positive images of**

minority youth as a means to address the root causes of racism and hate speech, including through the dissemination of information on the history and culture of minorities.

69. **States should deliver or fund programmes for minority youth aimed at providing them with the necessary skills to better express themselves through the use of new technologies.**

70. **States should commit to the democratization of the Internet as a form of social justice. They should guarantee the global and open nature of the Internet, which can be a driving force in accelerating progress towards development and is of particular importance to minority youth advocacy and connectedness.**

71. **States should support minority youth-led media initiatives, for example through national broadcasting agencies and other media institutions such as television or radio programmes in minority languages, and ensure the inclusion of minority characters played by minority youth actors. States should ensure that minority media reach out to other audiences as such outreach would contribute to changing negative stereotypes of minorities. States should allocate greater human, technical and financial resources to innovative media projects that can promote diverse societies and highlight cultural diversity.**

72. **National and international public institutions should use social media in an attractive and engaging way to challenge the dominant narratives in the traditional mainstream media and to give a new voice to minority youth in the media landscape.**

73. **States should promote the use of social media as a means of direct participation and access to decision-making, and facilitate the engagement of youth and minority youth. Social media are a critical tool allowing greater involvement in public life and creating new spaces for minority youth to participate in public debates, and can particularly be used as a platform for outreach and advocacy.**

74. **States should proactively promote cultural diversity, inclusion, education and tolerance in cooperation with all types of digital media and traditional media, to disseminate information about minorities' rights and give a voice to minorities' concerns and views.**

75. **States should promote digital literacy in educational curricula and ensure access to information on the Internet.**

76. **States should build trust and engage with minority groups before seeking to disseminate messages concerning them, including through social media.**

77. **Digital media have an important role to play to counter youth radicalization and to combat xenophobia and racism.**

78. **Institutions that train journalists should seek to promote an accurate, equitable and increased representation of all social groups in the media, and should include in their programmes training for journalists about human rights, diversity and non-discrimination, and unconscious bias.**

79. **Media institutions should promote responsible media and social media usage through formal and informal education, and should address and raise public awareness about irresponsible, incomplete and discriminatory media reporting, seeking to counter it by providing accurate and diverse reporting.**

To minority communities

80. **Minority media initiatives should be sensitive to issues that directly concern the respective minority communities as well as to issues that concern the broader society. In addition, they need to take into consideration the diversity of opinions and perceptions that exist within the minority communities themselves.**

VI. Recommendations on the role of minority youth in promoting peace and stability

A. Discussion

81. The session was introduced by Wai Nu, Director and founder of the Women Peace Network (Myanmar), Francia Marquez, Afro-Colombian leader and human rights defender (Colombia) and Nfor Hanson Nchanji, founder of the Cameroon News Agency (Cameroon). The panellists discussed their experiences as young persons belonging to minorities in seeking to bring peace, understanding and respect for different communities in their respective countries. They highlighted the role of young minority men and women as innovators and agents of change, whose contributions should be seen as an essential part of building peaceful communities. The panellists explored ways in which minority youth were adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and how the disruption of access by young people to education and economic opportunities could have a dramatic impact on durable peace and reconciliation. They described combating structural racism and discrimination as a critical component of peacebuilding. They noted that many minority youth lacked faith in national institutions, and underscored the importance of providing reparation to minority youth affected by conflict. They underscored the leadership role of youth in raising awareness on non-violence and peaceful advocacy.

82. The discussion was moderated by John Packer, Director of the Human Rights Research and Education Center at the University of Ottawa (Canada). Participants in the plenary discussion pointed out that youth from historically marginalized communities were disproportionately affected by conflict and violence. They called for local strategies to reduce violence and terrorism by fighting the social exclusion of young minority people as well as measures to address impunity for violations against minority youth and insecurity within minority communities. Participants hailed the potential of young leaders to establish links between different religious, ethnic and linguistic communities, and called for greater support for youth movements.

83. A number of participants made reference to Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) and the need for meaningful involvement by minority youth, including young minority women, at all levels of peacebuilding, conflict prevention and countering of violence and violent extremism. They acknowledged that sustainable and lasting peace could not be achieved without the meaningful participation of minority youth in the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements.

84. Participants also highlighted the importance of including young people belonging to minorities in national efforts to counter violence and extremism. They condemned the practices of violent extremist groups, including the recruitment of young people in refugee camps, religious institutions, universities and via social media. Participants spoke of the vital role young people could play in educational and religious institutions to promote tolerance and combat hate speech and terrorism, and hailed efforts such as interfaith youth dialogue initiatives to prevent extremism and promote peace and tolerance.

B. Recommendations

85. **States and the international community should ensure targeted protection of minority youth during and after conflict, in accordance with their obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law, and investigate and prosecute those responsible for crimes under international law. Minority youth working as human rights activists for their community should receive specific protection in times of conflict.**

86. **Young people belonging to minorities, and in particular young minority women, should be included as key beneficiaries of post-conflict reparations.**

87. **States and United Nations entities should pay particular attention to youth belonging to minorities when implementing Security Council resolution 2250 (2015).**

88. **States and the international community should value the contribution of youth peacebuilders and young civil society actors and engage with them; they should build trust with, train and work with grass-roots minority youth groups on local and wider issues related to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. States, parties to conflicts and the international community should create these channels of communication to assess the specific needs of minority youth in any given society and include their perspective and concerns when negotiating and implementing peace processes, including at the resettlement or repatriation and reintegration and reconstruction stages.**

89. **States should create a safe environment for minority youth, specifically for young women, to be able to participate in peacebuilding processes. They should consider setting up mechanisms that would enable young people belonging to minorities to participate meaningfully in peace processes and dispute resolution mechanisms. They should ensure that minority youth, including young minority women, are meaningfully involved at all levels of peacebuilding, conflict prevention and countering of violence and violent extremism.**

90. **Youth intercultural dialogue should be promoted as a critical tool for the prevention of conflict and the promotion of reconciliation processes and mutual understanding in post-conflict societies.**

91. **States should incorporate intercultural learning and conflict resolution skills in education systems and provide support to civil society educational initiatives that provide youth, including minority youth, with such learning and skills development.**

92. **States and regional and international organizations should ensure the support and development of international programmes for youth, providing the opportunity for intercultural exchanges and for the recognition and promotion of, and respect for, diversity.**